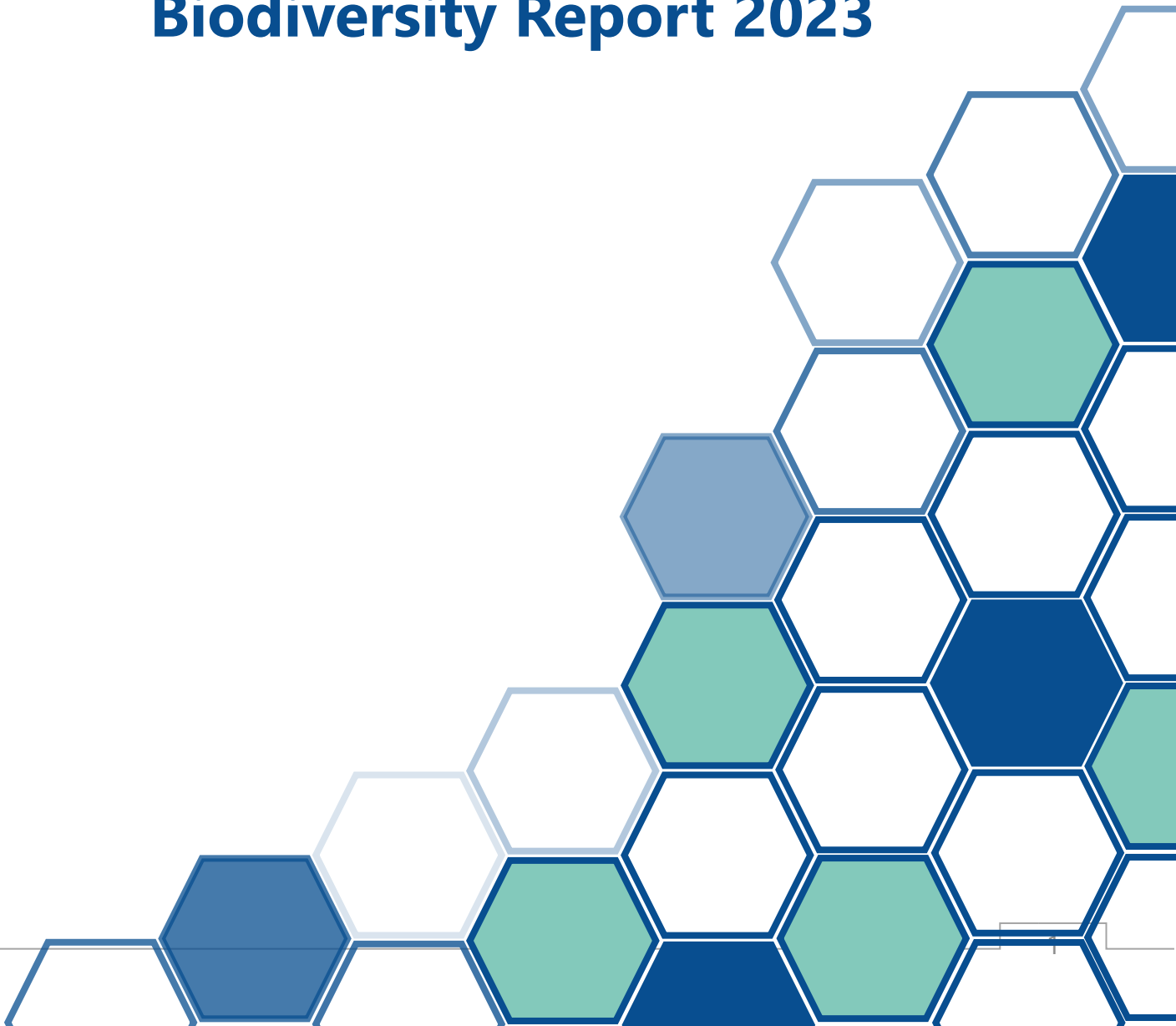


Disclosure

SCOTLAND

Biodiversity Report 2023



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Introduction

1. We, Disclosure Scotland are an Executive Agency of the Scottish Government. Scottish Ministers decide on our policy and objectives, and we are responsible for meeting those objectives on their behalf. Our portfolio responsibility rests with the Minister for Children, Young People and Keeping the Promise.
2. We primarily deliver a safeguarding role, providing our customers with accurate information about criminal histories, in good time, and bar (ban) unsuitable people from working with children and vulnerable adults. In doing so, we:
 - help Scotland flourish and become a safer, more inclusive place to live
 - make communities safer by making sure unsuitable people do not work with people who are vulnerable
 - contribute to inclusive and fair recruitment, helping employers make informed decisions

We do these through our three essential functions: disclose, protect, and promote.

3. We are based at Pacific Quay, Govan, Glasgow by the river Clyde. The office building is leased in the name of Scottish Ministers and shared with the Scottish Police Authority (SPA). We occupy 74% of the building and costs are shared on an occupancy basis.
4. During the reporting period 2021 to 2023, staff figures reached a maximum number of 460 with an average over the period of 398.

Hybrid working patterns have reduced the number of staff accommodated in Pacific Quay. Available statistics from 1 August 2022 to 31 October 2023 record an average of 94 staff working from our office premises each day.

Statutory duties

Sustainability

5. We report yearly through the Scottish Sustainability Network (SSN) on greenhouse gas emissions. We have achieved a 67% drop in these emissions from the baseline year of 2015/16.
6. We have reduced our carbon emissions to reach 155 tCO₂e emissions during 2023. This has been reached within the timescale set and is well below our audit target of 390 tCO₂e (tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent) by 2025/26.
7. Along with decreases in greenhouse gases, we have also reduced waste and water consumption over this period. This can be attributed to the introduction of hybrid working and reduction of staff in the office as well as a conscious move away from using paper and printing.
8. We have substantially reduced business travel needs by using video technology to host remote training workshops and customer support visits.
9. In the last year, we promoted initiatives to support sustainability including:
 - a cycle to work scheme promotion to encourage more people to ride to work
 - internal communications on climate change
 - running an environmental awareness event during climate week covering a variety of areas such as:
 - promoting a hierarchy of sustainable travel
 - demonstrating the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF) carbon footprint calculator for staff awareness

- showcasing the Home Energy Scotland portal to support staff to reduce energy consumption
- communicating good recycling practices to colleagues

Biodiversity

10. The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 as amended by the Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011, requires public bodies to report every three years on the actions which they have taken to meet their biodiversity duty. This forms part of the National Performance Framework that has 11 national outcomes including one for environmental issues which recognises our duty to protect and enhance the environment that we live in. This is our second biodiversity report.

Local action for 2024/2025

11. The areas below highlight our initial plan for the coming year, with a recognition that the current financial position and budgetary constraints will be a factor in actions that proceed to implementation.
12. We will be requesting that the landlord grant permission to install an outdoor food digester at Pacific Quay. This promotes the growth of beneficial micro-organisms and the desired aerobic digestion process, improving soil quality in the surrounding area.
13. We will be requesting that the landlord agrees to include native plants in the immediate vicinity of the cone. This would attract bees and butterflies. Notably, there are beehives in Glasgow City Centre that are within a half mile radius of Pacific Quay.

14. We will explore replenishing indoor plants to improve air quality within the office and benefit the environment by improving air humidity to regulate temperature and reduce energy consumption.
15. Pacific Quay has trees and hedgerows which we will fit with bird boxes and bird feeders. The feeders will attract birds to the area where they can use the bird boxes to rear their young. Having the birds resident will naturally control insects and depending on the variety of bird attracted can help with weed control. Providing bird feeders will also give birds energy for migration.
16. We will organise litter picking events to clean-up the area around Pacific Quay. This will encourage staff to work together outdoors along the Clydeside and benefit the eco system by removing plastics and other human-made waste in the vicinity from entering the river.
17. We will continue to work with building maintenance contractors to establish new ways of reducing energy consumption. Replacement of fluorescent bulbs with energy efficient LED bulbs will continue.
18. We are using a battery collection service for both on-site batteries and staff to deposit personal batteries for safe recycling.
19. We will investigate the feasibility of installing a green roof on top of the bike shed at Pacific Quay. This will increase biodiversity and improve the habitat of birds, butterflies, and insects in the area.
20. We will investigate installing bee hives on the roof at Pacific Quay. This would complement the installation of a green roof on the bike shed and native plants around the building. With greenspaces such as Festival Park and Bellahouston Park nearby the bees will also help improve biodiversity further afield.
21. We have installed car charging facilities at Pacific Quay and will look to promote their use in the coming year to help to further reduce emissions and support colleagues to use sustainable and greener travel options.

Procurement

22. We comply with the sustainable procurement duty and ensure that procurement activity is aligned to a range of policy priorities that are described in the National Performance Framework. Compliance with the duty also helps us to meet other legal obligations on procurement including climate change, human rights, and equality obligations. We report annually on how our procurement policies and activities have contributed to carbon emissions reduction targets, contributed to climate change adaptation, and acted sustainably. We will continue to ensure:

- a reduction in supplier deliveries through consolidation where appropriate and considering re-use or recycling wherever appropriate
- awareness of climate literacy and circular economy amongst all procurement staff and expanding the awareness to relevant internal staff involved in procurement activity using the e-learning tools provided by Scottish Government as part of the sustainable procurement toolkit
- measuring and reporting the social value and net zero outcomes from contracts using appropriate methodology
- promotion of local service delivery, reduce road miles, help de-carbonise the supply chain and support opportunities for local supply in our procurement approach
- we will challenge the ways on how much we procure and where we can minimise any waste - this may require change in terms of specification and efficient disposal
 - this may involve revisiting the need and may result in a change in requirements for goods and services

- consideration also on whether what we currently have is good enough, can be used for longer or can be reused, refurbished or repaired

Moving forward

23. This report has highlighted our aspirations to continue to improve biodiversity at Disclosure Scotland. Progress will be reported in our next report due in 2026. Any actions agreed and implemented will be reviewed and will be subject to budget considerations.

24. We will determine the feasibility of starting an Environmental Working Group to investigate education and volunteering opportunities for our people in relation to Climate Change and Biodiversity. This group would also look at other opportunities for us to maximise our positive impact at Pacific Quay and work in conjunction with the Scottish Police Authority to achieve this.